

# 3. HOUSE RULES

## CROSS CONTAMINATION PREVENTION

FOR RETAIL BUSINESSES USING RETAILS SAFE AND HANDLING UNWRAPPED RAW MEAT AND RAW MEAT PRODUCTS

(FOR EXAMPLE RAW MEAT, POULTRY, MINCE, SAUSAGES OR BACON)

The House Rules Section contains 8 sub-sections, each of which covers a different food safety management subject. Once you have completed the Business Selector you will have selected the House Rules relevant to your type of business.

Every House Rule sub-section begins with guidance and then provides advice on how to write your own House Rules.

A template is then provided for you to use when writing your House Rules. Once completed, this should reflect your current safe working practices.

### WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

- Read the guidance provided at the beginning of this sub-section
- Draw up your own House Rules describing how you intend to prevent cross contamination in your business
- Once you have completed all your House Rules, remember to update your Action Plan

Think about the cross contamination prevention practices that you already have in place. It is possible that you will simply have to write these down to produce your Cross Contamination Prevention House Rules.

**THE CROSS CONTAMINATION PREVENTION HOUSE RULES ARE AN ESSENTIAL COMPONENT OF YOUR HACCP BASED SYSTEM AND MUST BE KEPT UP TO DATE AT ALL TIMES**



**This sub-section will give guidance on cross contamination prevention. At the end of the sub-section you will be asked to write your own House Rules to show how you prevent cross contamination in your business.**

#### **Why is it important to prevent Cross Contamination?**

Foods such as raw meats and raw meat products for example sausages and bacon can contain harmful bacteria. These raw meats and meat products can be made safe by cooking which kills bacteria. However, the harmful bacteria on these foods can be spread to cooked/ready-to-eat foods either by direct contact or via people and objects.

Safe handling practices will reduce the chance of transferring harmful bacteria from raw food to cooked/ready-to-eat food. This is known as cross contamination prevention.

#### **HAZARDS** (What can go wrong)

**Microbiological cross contamination** can happen in two ways:

- Food poisoning bacteria can be spread by Direct cross contamination which is contact between raw meat and cooked/ready-to-eat food during transport, storage or preparation.
- Food poisoning bacteria can also be spread by Indirect cross contamination - for example, via equipment, utensils, work surfaces or staff handling food.

#### **CONTROLS** (How you can prevent the hazard)

Cross contamination can be minimised by the following safe handling practices:

##### **Personnel**

- Maintain good personal hygiene at all times (*refer to your **Personal Hygiene House Rules***).
- Thoroughly wash hands after handling raw meat and before touching other food or equipment.

##### **Delivery vehicles**

- Raw and cooked/ready-to-eat foods must be kept separate during delivery.

##### **Storage**

- Use separate refrigerators for raw meat and cooked/ready-to-eat foods where possible. Where this is not possible, store raw meat in the bottom of a shared refrigerator below the cooked/ready-to-eat foods.
- Raw meat, stored in freezers, must be adequately wrapped to prevent leakage. If possible, raw meat should be stored in a separate freezer, or part of a freezer, away from cooked/ready-to-eat foods.

##### **Display**

- Keep raw meat and ready-to-eat foods separate while on display.

**Defrosting and cooling**

- Raw meat, which is being defrosted, requires to be stored on the bottom shelf of the refrigerator in a tray/bowl which will catch any “drips” as the food is defrosting.
- All foods in the process of being cooled require to be kept separate from raw meat.

**Equipment**

- Separate designated equipment should be used for raw meat and cooked/ready-to-eat foods. If this is not possible, then your Cross Contamination Prevention House Rules must specify thorough cleaning and disinfection of equipment between uses.
- Probe thermometers require to be thoroughly cleaned and sanitised between uses.
- Ideally, separate thermometers should be used for raw meat and cooked/ready-to-eat foods.
- When cleaning, it is recommended that high risk areas are cleaned before low risk, especially when the same cleaning equipment is being used.

**Utensils**

- Designated utensils should be used for the handling of raw meat and separate utensils used for cooked/ready-to-eat foods.
- It is important to reduce the handling of ready-to-eat food. This may be achieved in various ways such as the use of dedicated tongs and serving spoons. This will assist in reducing the risk of cross contamination.

**Safe preparation**

- Separate work surfaces for food preparation should ideally be used.
- If it is not possible to have separate work surfaces then your Cross Contamination Prevention House Rules must specify thorough cleaning and disinfection between uses.



- Don't top up containers or fillings - put out a new batch.
- Keep foods that are cooling, in clean containers away from raw foods and open windows/doors.
- If preparing hot filled rolls, don't use the same knife for cutting raw sausage and cutting the roll.
- Beware of the 'drips' from defrosting raw meat and poultry which may contaminate other foods or surfaces.
- Don't reuse foil, cling film or freezer bags.
- Thoroughly clean plastic containers and lids between uses.

**Information on allergens can be found in the Stock Control House Rules Section.**

### WHAT YOU NEED TO DO NOW

To effectively manage the cross contamination prevention part of your HACCP based system and using the information in this sub-section for guidance, go to the next page and write a list of House Rules covering cross contamination prevention for your business.

**Here is an example of how you could write your House Rules :**

Describe: • Control Measures and Critical Limits (where applicable) • Monitoring including frequency	
Storage	<i>Separate refrigerators used for raw meat and cooked/ready-to-eat foods.</i>

### MONITORING (Checking your Control Measures)

Once you have completed your House Rules for Cross Contamination Prevention, you must then monitor their use.

### RECORDING (Keeping a Record of your Monitoring)

Keep a record of the monitoring you carry out. Record your weekly Cross Contamination Prevention check on the COLD Record or the HOT AND COLD Record (depending on the type of food you produce in your business).

### CORRECTIVE ACTION (What to do if things go wrong)

If you find that your Cross Contamination Prevention House Rules are not being followed you must make a record of the problem identified and the action you have taken to correct it (this is known as a Corrective Action). For example if you find that raw meat and salad vegetables have been delivered to your premises side-by-side in the same container, your Corrective Action would be to contact the supplier then have the delivery returned and consider changing supplier. This information can be entered in either the COLD Record or the HOT AND COLD Record. Further information on these records can be found in the 'Records' Section of this manual.

It is required that all Records of Monitoring and any Corrective Action(s) taken be kept for an appropriate period of time to demonstrate that your HACCP based system is working effectively.

### Action Plan

Once your have completed all your House Rules, remember to update your Action Plan.

**The Cross Contamination Prevention House Rules are an essential component of your HACCP based system and must be kept up to date at all times. Your House Rules need to be written to accurately reflect how you run your business and be readily understood by all of your staff handling food.**

## CROSS CONTAMINATION PREVENTION HOUSE RULES

Enter a statement of your **Cross Contamination House Rules** in the table below:

Describe: • Control Measures and Critical Limits (where applicable) • Monitoring including frequency	
Personnel	
Delivery vehicles	
Storage	
Display	
Defrosting and cooling	
Equipment	
Utensils	
Safe preparation	
Monitoring/recording and any other appropriate records used by your business	

Signed ..... Position in the business ..... Date .....

**The Cross Contamination Prevention House Rules are an essential component of your HACCP based system and must be kept up to date at all times.**